

<b>Promising Practices Case Study: Cultural Competency (The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), Toronto)</b>	
Background/Rationale for Project	
<p>As a key pediatric facility in Toronto, SickKids serves diverse populations and acknowledges the importance of delivering culturally competent care. SickKids views cultural competence as a key component of its organizational priorities such as 'family centered care' and 'patient safety'. Staff at SickKids argue that cultural competence is inherently related to family centered care since culture is a big part of families. Also, they argue that providing culturally competent patient/family health teaching is an important component of patient safety and quality care.</p> <p>The clinical teams at SickKids often provide written educational materials related to a child's treatment and care. However, these documents are not very meaningful if clients do not understand them. Translating some of the most frequently utilized materials enables SickKids to ensure that parents who don't speak/understand English also benefit from this information. Providing interpreter services and translated patient education materials are important components of cultural competence. SickKids sees this as a broader aspect of access to quality and equitable care. When parents understand the instructions they are provided about their child's care at home etc. they can contribute to improved health outcomes for their children.</p>	
The Initiative	
<p>In order to improve access to culturally competent services, SickKids initiated the New Immigrant Support Network (NISN) in 2009. Funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, NISN focuses on two key cultural competence initiatives: 1) cultural competence <i>education</i> for SickKids staff and volunteers, and 2) <i>translation</i> of various patient education resources and other materials into the most commonly spoken languages at SickKids.</p> <p><i>Education:</i> The education component includes a half-day workshop for staff and volunteers who do not have direct clinical contact with patients and families, and a one and a half to two-day workshop for clinical staff. To date, more than 2,000 staff have attended the workshops that teach cultural awareness which will help to ensure that all children and families who come to SickKids have equitable access to high-quality, safe and family-centred care.</p> <p><i>Translation:</i> As part of the project, NISN translated 3,000 pages on the <i>AboutKidsHealth</i> website into French and Chinese. In addition, 275 core and family-health information articles and 25 documents such as the Consent to Treatment form were translated into French, Chinese, Arabic, Spanish, Urdu and Tamil, and, in some cases Punjabi and Portuguese. Audio files of the multilingual materials will be made available online at <a href="http://www&gt;AboutKidsHealth.ca">www&gt;AboutKidsHealth.ca</a> and through other distribution channels at SickKids. Also, SickKids has made best practices and resources available to other hospitals across Ontario through workshops and training on cultural competence.</p>	
Strengths of the Project	

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Staff state that the successes of the project can be attributed to organizational commitment, including commitment from the highest levels within the organization. Also important has been the openness and willingness on the part of practitioners to provide the best and most equitable care possible. Funder flexibility has also been critical to project success. Staff state that funders have trusted the HSN team and have enabled them to creatively use of project funds to fit project needs. Finally, the availability of project funding has been invaluable for the successes of the project. Staff argue that without the necessary funding, it would not be possible to realize the goals of the project.

### Challenges

The NISN initiative has presented several challenges to project staff. First, staff feel that the nature of the topic itself is taxing. Anything related to diversity or cultural competency raises discomfort in audiences. This reality is often exacerbated by the fact that, in a hospital setting, the focus on clinical programs and direct patient care often takes precedence, and as a result cultural competency is viewed as secondarily important. Second, in order to be successful there is a need for strong facilitators throughout the organization (as opposed to a single staff person) to heighten awareness about the pitfalls of culturally incompetent services. SickKids responded to this by appointing an 'executive champion' which signaled to the rest of the organization that this was an important initiative. Third, significant efforts have been required to meaningfully and comprehensively integrate the project vision, mission and goals into existing values at SickKids. For example, the project team has substantively tied cultural competence to values such as 'family centred care' and 'patient safety'.

### Outcomes/Sustainability

*Outcomes:* One of the desired outcomes of the initiative is behavioral change at the practitioner level due to education and workshop activities executed by NISN. Although a complete evaluation of the initiative has not been undertaken, there are several indicators that the initiative has successfully met projected outcomes. First, NISN staff routinely conduct a 'Commitment to Change' activity. This questionnaire is administered at the end of every workshop and asks participants to document 3 things that they would do differently in their clinical practice. About 2543 commitments have been documented. In-depth follow-up interviews with 53 participants has demonstrated that 78% of these commitments have already been implemented and 16% were in the process of being implemented. Second, overall patient satisfaction with the level of cultural sensitivity at SickKids has seen a significant increase of 5-6% since the workshops began. Third, part of the initiative was to develop precise content to aid communication and address language barriers for clients with limited English proficiency. The project team has developed an e-learning module on for providers on how to more effectively work with interpreters which will be available in the fall. The initiative has led to improvements in access to language services and a very significant increase in the demand for interpreter services. Finally, the project created 8 *multi-lingual way-finding kiosks* at the hospital. The kiosks, which currently provide directions to various locations as well as general information about services at SickKids in 6 languages, are expected to increase to 12 kiosks providing information in 10 languages in the near future.

*Sustainability:* There were several activities built into the project to ensure project sustainability. First, SickKids created a group of 'Champions' to promote and implement activities related to cultural competency in various departments. At project end, the Champions will either continue to promote

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cultural competency or pass the torch forward to other likeminded individuals. Second, cultural competency education/workshops have been made available through e-learning modules for free. NISN has also conducted 'train-the-trainer' workshops with 45 organizations and will continue to provide these workshops across Ontario over the next two years. NISN has also developed a facilitator's guide to help organizations conduct workshops on their own. As a result, after project end, even organizations with limited resources can access workshops/training material generated by the project. Third, cultural competency training is now built into existing work at SickKids. For example, cultural competency is integrated into training/orientation for new hires. Finally, policy/processes impacting the work of the hospital is developed in culturally appropriate ways.

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